



TALESPINNER

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-LACKLAND, TEXAS • www.lackland.af.mil • Vol. 69 No. 29 • July 20, 2012

Script for Leadership

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Steel Curtain Call

Franco Harris steals the show at base military clothing store
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Leading the way

Photo by Alan Boedeker

From left to right, U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet 2nd Class Nicque Robinson, Commander of Airmen Cadet 1st Class Joshua Hall, and Cadet 1st Class Christina Beckett lead the formation during practice just prior to the Air Force Basic Military Training graduation ceremony July 13 at the BMT parade grounds. Twenty-seven cadets from the academy's current junior class shadowed military training instructors as part of the Cadet Summer Leadership Program. The seven-week visit culminated with cadets leading key positions during the BMT graduation ceremony. **See related stories, PGs 12 & 13.**

Enlisted Perspective

Analog leadership in digital times

By James A. Roy
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

The United States Air Force is the world's most advanced air, space and cyberspace force.

Most of that can be attributed to you – our outstanding Airmen – but technology also plays a huge role. Advanced tools help us maintain an advantage over our adversaries. Technology has enabled our continuing success.

However, technology also threatens to cripple us.

As electronic communication becomes more widely used, our face-to-face interaction skills are beginning to suffer. We know how to text, Skype and FaceTime, but some of us seem reluctant to engage in a meaningful face-to-face conversation.

We value technology because it saves us time, provides conveniences and helps us be more efficient, but we must also recognize its potential to strip us of critical human connection skills.

This high-tech challenge has a low-tech solution. We need to strike a balance; we must continue to emphasize the importance of technology – a resource we

cannot and will not stop exploiting – but at the same time value and emphasize the importance and value of analog leadership.

Analog leadership means temporarily putting down the iPads and Android tablets, logging out of Facebook and Twitter, and switching phones to airplane mode to stop the stream of texts coming in and out. It means shutting off the technology and talking to each other – face-to-face, one-on-one.

Real human interaction – yes, for some of us it may be awkward at first, but getting to know each other better is an investment that will yield incalculable returns. Stronger connections will create a foundation on which we can grow more meaningful relationships.

And then we can turn the devices back on and use them for their intended purpose: to augment and add value to our real-life relationships.

As Airmen, we have to understand



how to use technology, because without it we are not as well-equipped to do our jobs. However, as human beings, we also have to understand how and when not to use technology, because when distracted by it we are not as well-equipped to relate to others.

Thank you for your service and your continued dedication to duty. I look forward to seeing you face-to-face as I travel around our great Air Force.

Be an ambassador for your AF

By Lt. Col. Marty Roodettes
Commander, 837th Training Squadron

It's hard to spend much time on Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland and not notice the many international personnel wearing different uniforms from all over the world. Thousands of personnel from more than 100 countries have attended training here, primarily at the Defense Language Institute-English Language Center and the Inter-American Air Forces Academy.

Like the trainees going through Basic Military Training and the Airmen attending technical school on JBSA-Lackland, these international students are away from home and in a completely new environment. To com-

plicate matters, they have to deal with a new language and a different culture.

Every day at Lackland is an opportunity for us to be ambassadors of our Air Force and our country with these international military students.

Most importantly, from a strategic standpoint, the impression we make on these international military members can have lasting effects on how they view the U.S. Air Force and the United States in general, and it could even affect future relations between our countries.

For many of them, their time spent here is their first and sometimes their only visit to the United States. Many partner-nation personnel only know the U.S. military and the United

States through what is depicted in Hollywood. As we know, that is not always the most accurate or flattering depiction of our great country.

We have a unique opportunity to showcase our Air Force and our country for these international students. The opinions our partner-nation military personnel form of the United States often start here and usually last a lifetime.

It is up to all of us to ensure that opinion is a positive one. The next time you are in the Exchange or the mini-mall, and you see someone in a different uniform, greet them with a hello and a smile, or strike up a conversation. I'm sure they will appreciate it and they will remember it for a very long time.

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TALESPINNER

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Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 502nd Air Base Wing. All photos, unless otherwise indicated, are U.S. Air Force photos.

Deadline for submissions
is noon Thursday the week prior
to publication.

NEWS IN BRIEF

SOFTWARE PIRACY AWARENESS

Base personnel should be aware of and avoid software piracy.

According to Air Force Instruction 33-114, *Software Management*, government-owned software cannot be installed on a home computer unless the software license explicitly allows users to do so and the base communications systems officer has authorized such use.

When authorized for installation on a home computer, only use the software for official Air Force business. Personal use may be a violation of the Copyright Act, which renders the individual user accountable and liable.

All commercial and government off-the-shelf software, to include freeware, shareware and software bundled with hardware like printers, scanners, and external hard drives, must be approved by the 802nd Communications Squadron prior to installation or purchase. Also, do not make any illegal copies of copyrighted software.

For issues pertaining to software use or for more information, contact your unit software license manager or the base software managers, Anita Rhude at 210-671-5051 or Thomas Doran at 210-671-1852.

HOME BUYERS' SEMINAR

A home buyers' seminar is Thursday, 1:30-3:30 p.m., in the Fellowship Room at Freedom Chapel.

Seminar topics include how to apply for a loan; loan criteria and the purchase process; how to choose the right home and a broker-real estate agent; and frequently asked questions for first-time home buyers.

Don Davis, a San Antonio Board of Realtors licensed broker-agent, is the guest speaker for the event.

For reservations and more information, contact Elvira Martinez at 210-315-7853.

FERS RETIREMENT PLANNING

The Alamo Federal Executive Board will sponsor a Federal Employee Retirement System planning seminar Monday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at Education Services Center 20, 1314 Hines Ave.

The seminar provides information on the federal retirement system, Thrift Savings Plan, Social Security benefits, Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance and survivor benefits.

For details, visit <http://sanantonioefb.org> or contact Bruce Bebow at 210-565-1860.



By Staff Sgt. Micky Bazaldua
59th Medical Wing Public Affairs

A new command chief for the Air Force's largest medical wing has taken the reigns as the top enlisted sergeant for the 59th Medical Wing.

Chief Master Sgt. Maurice James is the new command chief master sergeant. He is the second chief in the Air Force with a pharmacy background to assume the position as a wing command chief.

James will serve as the advisor to the 59th MDW commander and wing executive staff on matters concerning the morale, welfare, development, utilization and training of more than 1,800 enlisted members throughout the wing.

James entered the Air Force in February of 1986. His background includes various positions including pharmacy technician, squadron and group superintendent, first sergeant and MAJCOM functional manager. Before assuming his current position, he served as the chief, Medical Enlisted Force, Office of the Command Surgeon Headquarters Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Va.

"In the medical community, pharmacy personnel haven't really had the opportunity for these types of jobs due to it being a very small career field. I am totally excited and thrilled to have it and am certainly standing on the shoulders of some folks who have paved the way," said James.

When asked about his expectations for the enlisted force, the new command chief has a clear vision for each of the enlisted tiers.

"Airmen, I expect to learn hard, do their jobs and prepare to deploy because they are going to deploy. Non-commissioned officers, I will expect that, and for you to listen, continue to learn and lead. For the senior NCOs, take care of your Airmen and your mission."

An acronym the chief uses to describe what he would like to instill and see in Airmen of the 59th MDW is L.E.A.D.

"L stands for legacy. Always be focused because whether you know it or

New command chief takes reins at 59th Medical Wing



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Andy Bellamy

New Command Chief Master Sgt. Maurice James speaks about his vision for the 59th Medical Wing June 15 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. James replaces former Command Chief Master Sgt. Rick Robinson who retired June 22.

not, you are building your own legacy every day.

"E" means enjoy. Enjoy the journey. You must have balanced priorities. We will play hard but we also need to work hard and focus on the things that are important at the right times.

"A" is for attitude. Have a good attitude. We get to choose what type of attitude we are going to have every single day, and if we will choose to have a good attitude things will turn out a lot better for us and the people we are dealing with.

"D" represents discipline. We have to have discipline. If we can discipline ourselves then others don't have to. If we can be disciplined to do the things we know are right, things will turn out well."

James' vision also includes improving professional development for the three enlisted tiers and he plans on holding enlisted calls to discuss this in further detail in the near future.

"Development is key," he added. "It has to be about professional develop-

ment within the private organizations. There are already really strong private organizations focused on professional development, from enlisted performance report writing to time management, and my plan is to join the established efforts in every tier and see where we can improve."

The legacy James hopes to leave behind is excellent customer service.

"The golden rule is treating others the way we want to be treated," he advised.

"If we can, when dealing with customers and each other, treat others with kindness, dignity and respect. If I could get that one aspect embedded within the culture of this organization, I would see that as a success. We want our patients to say 'Wow, I get great care at the 59th MDW.'"

James says he is truly honored and humbled to be here.

"I am glad to call the 59th MDW home now, and I am looking forward to cranking the mission with our medic warriors."

CHANGE OF COMMAND



Photo by Alan Boedeker

Brig. Gen. Theresa C. Carter, Joint Base San Antonio and 502nd Air Base Wing commander, presents the 802nd Mission Support Group organizational guidon to incoming commander Col. William A. Eger, III Monday during a change of command ceremony at JBSA-Lackland. As commander of the 802nd MSG, Eger leads the second largest support group in the Air Force. The organization's more than 4,400 men and women support the training of 74,000 students annually and provide a complete spectrum of community services to a base population of more than 49,000 people and 72 mission partners.

WHASC offering Saturday sports physicals in August

Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center is offering Saturday sports physicals for military dependents, ages 6-26, who are enrolled in the Pediatric, Adolescent Medicine, or Family Health Clinics at Wilford Hall. Physicals will be available Aug. 11 and Aug. 18 from 8-11 a.m. and no appointments are necessary.

Patients should use the clinic entrance near the coffee-snack bar.

Patients should plan on arriving early to avoid a long wait. Dependents should bring their sports physical examination school forms, immunization records, and any third party liability or alternate insurance cards.

Parents of children with chronic medical conditions like asthma and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder must schedule a sports physical appointment with their Primary Care Manager. Acute illnesses like colds and rashes will not be addressed during the sports physicals.

PCM appointments can be scheduled by calling 210-916-9900. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Carlos Rios at 210-292-6719 or 1st Lt. Gala Edwardson at 210-292-1960.

Purple Heart recipient gets new lease on AF life

By Wayne Amann

Air Force ISR Agency Public Affairs

March 5, 2008: A rocket impacts near the living quarters of then Staff Sgt. Chad Umipeg at Tallil Air Base, Iraq. His resulting head injury jeopardizes his Air Force career.

Jan. 7, 2010: The Air Force Medical Evaluation Board returns Umipeg to full active-duty status after finding his migraines are not affecting his job, and he is healthy enough to deploy for the fourth time.

June 28, 2012: Umipeg receives the Purple Heart for his head injury during a commander's call at the 668th Alteration and Installation Squadron here.

The three events punctuated a four-year span testing Umipeg's resolve to remain a bluesuiter.

"It's been a rough road," now Tech. Sgt. Umipeg said. "From all the treatment and counseling to almost being boarded out (medically retired) of the Air Force, then being allowed to keep my career and press on ... it's a blessing. I'm very thankful."

Since the rocket incident, Umipeg had been waiting patiently for an official determination as to whether or not his head injury and subsequent migraine headaches were combat-related, and the result of direct exposure to the blast.

Recounting the day of the attack, Umipeg, a project manager who was deployed to Tallil from the 633rd Civil Engineer Squadron at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va., wrote:

"When the rocket came in, I was sitting on a metal folding chair. I leaned back and heard what sounded like a freight train flying through the air. A few seconds later I heard an explosion. My chair was pulled out from under me, and I went straight to the ground head first, hitting the floor with the back of my head. I completely blacked out."

During his remaining two months at Tallil, Umipeg experienced persistent headaches and significant sleep loss. He suffered the worst headache of his life May 13, 2008.

"While flying from Tallil, Iraq, to Saleem, Kuwait," he wrote, "The headache caused me to have a panic attack, and I passed out during the flight."

Upon returning home, Umipeg had a positive traumatic brain injury screening that revealed a concussion and post traumatic migraines. He also was diagnosed with memory loss and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder for which he underwent treatment for one year.

Besides the Air Force Medical Evaluation Board reinstating Umipeg to active duty, it ruled there was sufficient evidence to determine the head injury and migraines were combat-related and the result of direct exposure to the blast of the enemy rocket. That earned Umipeg his Purple Heart.

"This is something you don't want to give and don't want to get," said Lt. Col. Monti Knode, 668th



Photo by William Belcher

Lt. Col. Monti Knode, commander, 668th Alteration and Installation Squadron, and Tech. Sgt. Chad Umipeg pause during Umipeg's Purple Heart presentation at commander's call June 28. Umipeg received the medal for injuries he sustained from a rocket attack March 5, 2008, while deployed to Tallil Air Base, Iraq.

ALIS commander, who presented the Purple Heart to Umipeg. "It means someone was in harm's way and got the worst of it."

Umipeg, a 14-year veteran and son of a retired senior master sergeant, expressed his thanks to many co-workers in the squadron, plus those veterans in the Wounded Warrior Program and Wounded, Injured and Ill Program for helping him make the arduous way back to re-join his wingmen.

One person was key in the Lakewood, Wash., native's recovery.

"Without my wife Jessica, there is no support," Umipeg said. "She was there for all the craziness, the walking around at three in the morning, the outbursts of anger, and all the treatments. She stood by my side. There's no amount of training that can prepare a spouse on how to deal with something like that. Without her, I wouldn't be here."

AIR FORCE AID



Photo by Steve Elliott

Brig. Gen. Theresa C. Carter, Joint Base San Antonio and 502nd Air Base Wing commander, right, accepts a \$2,500 check from retired Lt. Gen. John D. Hopper Jr., Air Force Aid Society chief executive officer, during a ceremony July 16. The check is given to organizations throughout the Air Force who exceed their participation goal during the Air Force Assistance Fund campaign. The participation rate for Air Force members at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston was 91.2 percent; the Air Force average of 22 percent. The \$2,500 will be used for programs funded by AFAS grants at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.

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**BE RESPONSIBLE!
SEAT BELTS SAVE LIVES!
BUCKLE UP AND WEAR YOURS!**

BMT HONORS

Congratulations to the following 70 Airmen for being selected as honor graduates among 700 Air Force basic military trainees graduating today:

320th Training Squadron
Flight 465

Jovanny Arredondo
Samuel Borer
Mark Bowers
Christopher Flitton
Mark Hernandez
Cody Martin
Joseph Newbern
Ginkel Van
Matthew Vondrasek
Flight 466

Mary Archer
Jami DeVries
Raeanne Mercier
Julie Reyes
Flight 471

Derek Degrote
Eric Good
Jared Langley
Michael Martin
Dennis Parks
Flight 472

Kyle Burbach
Michael Dreyer
Joseph Grazzini

Sean Hallowell
Quinton Pigg
321st Training Squadron
Flight 475

Miles Dodge
Samad Elliott
Joshua Ferrell
James Harps
Justin Householder
Brian Mitchell
Ryan Thielges
Flight 476

Victoria Billups
322nd Training Squadron
Flight 469

Kenneth Armstrong III
Andrew Binegar
Michael Brockett
James Brown
Kenneth Buckley Jr.
Andrew Burrell
Garrett Grant
Joel Harris
Ryan Martin
Joshua Morris
Trenton Shaffer
Josiah Straub
Flight 470

Danielle Egbert
Abigail Wood

323rd Training Squadron
Flight 467

Michael Bednaz
Jacob Bradeen
Adam Gentry
Isaac Gibbs
Corey Harris
Joseph Hogan
John McLaughlin
Vitaliy Stefanov
Thomas Urbanek
Flight 468

Benjamin Hopper
Ryan Kneafsey
Andrew Pang Jr.

326th Training Squadron
Flight 463

Christopher Burns
Jordan Listi
Flight 464

Bryce Haviland
331st Training Squadron
Flight 473

Jason Gates
David Hinton
Evan Hofstadter
Kejdi Memetaj
Shawn Murphy
Jerry Sanders Jr.
Flight 474

Ross Hammarin

Devin Powner
Leon Simpson III
James Testerman
Top BMT Airman
Josiah Straub, 322nd TRS, Flight 469

Most Physically Fit
Male Airmen
Mark Bowers, 320th TRS, Flight 465
Jeffrey Ehler, 323rd TRS, Flight 467
Nicholas Fowler, 320th TRS, Flight 465
Ryan Martin, 322nd TRS, Flight 469

Female Airmen
Reyes Julie, 320th TRS, Flight 466
Howbert Briell, 320th TRS, Flight 466
Steiger Crystal, 320th TRS, Flight 466
Thompson Courtney, 320th TRS, Flight 466

Male Flights
323rd TRS, Flight 467
320th TRS, Flight 471
323rd TRS, Flight 468

Female Flights
320th TRS, Flight 466
321st TRS, Flight 476
322nd TRS, Flight 470

Top Academic Flight
326th TRS, Flight 464
320th TRS, Flight 471
320th TRS, Flight 465

AF seeks medical commissioning candidates

By Debbie Gildea
Air Force Personnel Center

Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas – The Air Force is seeking interested officers, enlisted members and cadets who are eligible for fiscal 2013 Biomedical Sciences Corps training and commissioning programs.

The programs offer opportunities in doctor of physical therapy training, Ph.D. clinical psychology training, inter-service physician assistant and direct accession programs.

According to Air Force Personnel Center officials, each program has specific criteria, but applicants for all programs must be U.S. citizens, meet minimum commissioning requirements, meet Air Force fitness standards and be medically qualified for worldwide duty.

Doctor of Physical Therapy Training Program

The U.S. Army-Baylor University Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy provides students entry-level competence in traditional physical therapy skills. Air Force enlisted students are commissioned as second lieutenants in the Air Force Medical Science Corps. Open to enlisted, officers and cadets in their final semester, Airmen join the Air Force Biomedical Sciences Corps upon successful completion of training, at which time graduates earn a doctorate of physical therapy degree from Baylor University.

Applicants must have a 1,000 on the old format Graduate Record Examination or 297 on the new format, with a minimum score of 450 (or 150 new) in the verbal portion; at least 100 observation hours in a variety of clinical settings; an undergraduate grade

point average of 3.1 on a 4.0 scale; and prerequisite courses including anatomy, physiology, biology, physics, chemistry, psychology, social science and statistics.

Applications will be accepted through Nov. 25. Applicants should email the AFPC Biomedical Science Corps Utilization and Education Branch at afpc.DPANW@us.af.mil or call 210-565-2775 (DSN 665-2775) for more information. In addition, information is available at <https://kx.afms.mil/afbsceducation>, and on the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil>.

Ph.D. Clinical Psychology Training Program

The Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences graduate training program in Military Clinical Psychology is designed to prepare broad-based Ph.D. clinical psychologists and to emphasize appreciation and understanding of the needs of the military. Eligibility is open to active-duty officers and enlisted, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members with a GRE of 1,100 (old format) or 302 (new format).

Applications can be submitted to the USUHS website through Jan. 1, 2013, and USUHS will submit them to AFPC. For more information, application instructions and general guidance, go to www.usuhs.mil/mps/militaryprograms.html.

Inter-service Physician Asst. Training Program

Airmen who meet Inter-service Physician Assistant Training admission criteria and successfully complete required training are awarded a qualifying degree as a physician assistant. The program is open to active duty enlisted and commissioned members, with applications due between Nov. 1, 2012 and Jan. 25, 2013.

Enlisted applicants must be airmen first class

through senior master sergeants who have between two and 14 years active military service as of Aug. 1, 2014. Active duty officers must have less than four years of time in service by Aug. 31, 2014. ROTC and USAFA cadets must be released by the AFPC line officer accessions branch before they can begin the application process, and USAFA cadets must also be endorsed for the program by the USAFA Health Professions Advisory Committee before applying.

Application packages must include academic worksheets, transcripts and SAT reports, which must be emailed to the AFPC Biomedical Science Corps Utilization and Education Branch at afpc.dpanw@us.af.mil, or mailed to AFPC/DPANW, 550 C Street West Ste 27, Randolph AFB TX 78150-4729. Completed applications are due Jan. 25, and the selection board will convene Mar. 22.

For more information on these and other medical training programs, including additional criteria, application procedures, and commissioning programs, go to the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil> or the medical services knowledge exchange site at <https://kx.afms.mil/afbsceducation>.

For more information about other commissioning opportunities and personnel issues, visit myPers.



Photo by Alan Boedeker

U.S. Air Force Academy cadet Nicque Robinson leads trainees from 323rd Training Squadron through column movements July 11.



Photos by Alan Boedeker

Above: U.S. Air Force Academy cadet Tanner Bennett, right, assists Self Aid Buddy Care monitors as trainees learn proper tracheal intubation procedures for inserting a breathing tube to open airways.

Right: U.S. Air Force Academy cadet Nicque Robinson, right, helps facilitate training during Self Aid Buddy Care instruction at the 343rd Training Squadron.



Academy cadets develop leadership skills at BMT

By Mike Joseph

Senior Writer

U.S. Air Force Academy cadets learned first-hand over the past seven weeks how military training instructors develop the Air Force's newest warrior Airmen in basic military training.

The 27 cadets in the Summer Leadership Program developed leadership skills by shadowing MTIs in seven BMT squadrons at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

The cadets from the academy's incoming junior class, along with two supervising seniors, arrived on base May 24 and departed Saturday after participating in key positions in the July 13 BMT graduation parade.

"The cadets followed the same steps as a student training to be a Military Training Instructor," said Staff Sgt. Corey Norris, 323rd Training Squadron NCO in charge, who oversaw the cadets during their stay in BMT.

"They shadowed MTIs to learn the leadership skills and the different leadership techniques it takes to mold future Airmen," he said. "The cadets did the same thing our NCOs do on a daily basis, and they will be able to draw from their experiences here in BMT when they lead basic cadet training next summer for the academy's incoming freshmen."

Norris said the Summer Leadership Program teaches the future Air Force officers how to become better leaders by understanding how future Airmen are developed in basic training.

"They will have a better understanding about the enlisted force and how MTIs mentor the trainees," he said. "They experienced

what BMT is like for both the MTIs and the trainees. Along with developing and enhancing their leadership skills, they also learned about character development."

Seniors Joshua Hall and Christina Beckett supervised their underclassmen counterparts. Both participated in the Summer Leadership Program last year as underclassmen, and gained a greater understanding of the program's future benefits.

"I've learned a lot more this year, especially about leadership and mentoring," Hall said. "Here, you're not worried about school or athletics. You're only concerned about the military side. This summer has better prepared us for our first duty station."

Beckett agreed with her classmate. "This is totally different from last year," she said. "We're dealing with more people issues."

"We were in charge of 25 other people. This taught us how to work with them, how to handle their issues and be better mentors. It's been enlightening."

The focus and primary benefit of the program is for the cadets who shadowed MTIs and NCOs to pass on their training knowledge at the academy. It also exposed them to the importance of working with members of the enlisted corps.

"I've learned more in this program about leadership and mentoring in seven weeks than the three years I've been at the academy because of the roles," Hall said.

"We met with all the squadron commanders in an open forum, and had the opportunity to ask questions," he added. "What we learned from them will help us



Photo by Alan Boedeker

Cadets from the U.S. Air Force Academy participate in the July 13 Air Force Basic Military Training graduation ceremony on the parade grounds at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. Academy cadets led key positions during the graduation.



Photo by Alan Boedeker

U.S. Air Force Academy cadet Preston Nguyen leads trainees from 323rd Training Squadron through column movements July 11.

become better officers."

During their seven weeks at BMT, the cadets also worked on perfecting their military drill

skills. The program's culminating event was July 13 when the cadets filled the key positions in the weekly BMT graduation parade.

USAF Academy cadets get an ISR vector

By Wayne Amann

Air Force ISR Agency Public Affairs

Twelve United States Air Force Academy cadets were given an overview June 14 of the "silent warrior" world of the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency, as part of their Operation Air Force visit to the Gateway to the Air Force here.

Ops Air Force is a summer program designed to give cadets three weeks to experience, firsthand, everything an operational Air Force base has to offer.

"We have unprecedented ISR capabilities from a variety of assets that give today's war fighter a distinct information advantage," said '96 academy grad Lt. Col. Chris Williams, commander of the 320th Training Squadron and project officer for Ops Air Force cadets at Lackland. "Many of these cadets will work outside the intelligence community. But, it's important they understand how those capabilities are integrated, processed, packaged and decided upon. After all, they may be the ones acting on the actionable information produced by the ISR community."

The cadets received a comprehensive agency mission briefing from Staff Sgt. Todd Henson of the Commander's Action Group covering the personnel, organizational structure and capabilities of this global organization. The briefing, one of six delivered that morning in the agency's headquarters, followed a music video showcasing the varied missions performed by the agency's nearly 20,000 members.

"It's particularly interesting to see a presentation that breaks down specifics as to where ISR is going," said Cadet 2nd Class Terry Tilghman of Stow, of Ohio. "We have a general idea of how the intel career field works, but we don't have access to this kind of information."

Cadet 2nd Class Rachel Quesinberry from Nashville, Tenn., was equally impressed with what the ISR community brings to the fight.



Photo by William Belcher

Staff Sgt. Todd Henson of the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency Commanders Action Group briefs U.S. Air Force Academy cadets participating in the Operation Air Force Program. Henson presented a mission briefing detailing the personnel, organizational structure and capabilities of the global agency.

"It's something new to me, so it was real eye-opening how it plays into the operational Air Force, definitely," said Quesinberry, a biology major. "Now I have a better understanding of what they do."

Academy grad, 1st Lt. Andrew Caulk, Class of '09, Chief of Plans and Programs for Air Force ISR Agency Public Affairs, recently returned from a deployment and briefed the cadets on life 'outside the wire.'

"I wanted to share with them a sense of greater purpose," Caulk said. "Right now they only see school, training and the academy. I wanted them to understand a little bit of the real world: the war, service and sacrifice protecting our country."

The cadet's indoctrination to the intelligence community was part of their mission support/operations week of activities. They were sandwiched between a week of basic military training/technical training events and a week of activities centering on the Joint Base San Antonio organizational structure.

For Tilghman, who plans on "going pilot," his stay was highlighted by incentive flights in C-5 and F-16 aircrafts, courtesy of the 433rd Airlift Wing and 149th Texas Air National Guard respectively.

"They were awesome," he said. "If pilot doesn't work out I'm thinking aircraft maintenance and go to the Air Force Special Operations Command in some way."

Whichever blue-suiter career path Tilghman and the visiting cadets take, they'll have plenty to share from their three-week orientation with a second group of cadets scheduled to visit here July 26.

The Ops Air Force Program's message makes an impression on these future lieutenants.

"It's encouraging and gives me a lot of motivation to keep going at the academy, which has its difficult moments," Quesinberry said. "The program makes me look forward to serving as an officer."



**For more news and information
go to
www.lackland.af.mil**

TRICARE officials report scam involving lottery sweepstakes

The TRICARE Program Integrity office has become aware of a lottery sweepstakes scam where “winners” receive a fraudulent check with the TRICARE name.

Targeted individuals are contacted by mail with a letter stating they are winners of a USA lottery sweepstakes accompanied with a fraudulent check for \$250,000.

The letter states that the check is a portion of the winnings used to help pay taxes, insurance, handling, and shipping fees. The winner is then asked to return a portion of the funds

from the cashed check.

TRICARE beneficiaries who receive this lottery sweepstakes scam letter and check are encouraged to report the scam to the Managed Care Support Contractor Program Integrity Office – Health Net Federal Services, Humana Military Healthcare Services, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, Express Scripts Inc., or Wisconsin Physician Services.

Reports can also be made to the TRICARE Program Integrity office by emailing TRICARE FRAUDLINE at FRAUDLINE@tma.osd.mil or by fax to 303-676-3981.



**Stay up-to-date during special events
and inclement weather.
Call 210-671-NEWS**

Ramadan

The Islamic month of fasting

Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting, began Thursday or today, pending on the sighting of the new moon.

One may ask, "Why the uncertainty of the start and end of Ramadan?" Ramadan is the ninth month on the Islamic calendar, which is based on the lunar system. The months on the lunar calendar begin and end with the sighting of the new moon. Because of this, the beginning of Ramadan rotates throughout every month of the standard Gregorian calendar from year to year.

Ramadan is the month to which Muslims all over the world look forward. The entire month is spent fasting, praying, and reading the Qur'an. In fact, Muslims commemorate the Qur'an during Ramadan.

The religion of Al-Islam is based on five pillars:

- (1) belief in one God and Prophet Muhammad as the Messenger of God;
- (2) prayer;
- (3) alms;
- (4) fasting in Ramadan; and
- (5) pilgrimage to Makkah, at least once in a lifetime.

The Ramadan fast is applicable to all Muslims who

have reached the age of puberty. The fast begins daily at dawn and continues until sunset. During daylight hours, those who are fasting must abstain from food, drinks, and intimate relationships. Immediately after sunset, those observing the fast are required to break the fast by eating and drinking. However, one is not to overindulge. While the daylight hours are spent fasting, much of the night is spent in prayer and reading the Qur'an.

The Ramadan fast is for the benefit of the total person – spiritually, mentally and physically. While fasting, a Muslim is conscious of the need to appreciate and respect both mankind and the outer world as creations of the Almighty God.

Three days of celebration and thanksgiving follow the completion of the month of Ramadan. This celebration is known as Eid-al-Fitr.

This fast-breaking celebration will begin sometime between Aug. 18-19, depending on the sighting of the new moon, with a congregational prayer service at the Global Ministry Center, Bldg. 7452 at 9:30 a.m. A fellowship event will follow. Everyone is invited to partake in this cultural and religious event.

For more information, call Chaplain (Capt.) Sharior Rahman at 210-671-2941.

Exchange celebrates 117 years of service

In 1895, the War Department issued General Order 46 directing commanders to establish an Exchange at every post. Since then, Exchange associates have faithfully served alongside service members wherever they are called to serve. Today, whether at Bagram Air Base, or Barksdale Air Force Base, La., troops and their families know the Exchange is there.

On July 25, Lackland Exchange facilities will mark the Army & Air Force Exchange Service's 117th birthday with a host of savings and specials.

Shoppers using their Military Star Card to fill up at the Express from July 25-27 will see a discount of 17 cents per gallon.

The Military Star Card will also pay dividends at the food court on July 25 as diners can take 20 percent off orders at Exchange-operated restaurants like Burger King, Godfathers and Popeye's.

Also on July 25, Express customers can enjoy free 20- and 32-ounce fountain drinks and 20-ounce Fresh Java until 1:17 p.m.

The birthday savings even extend online where www.shopmyexchange.com will offer a one-day sale on hundreds of products including a 40-inch Sharp AQUOS 1080 LCD TV for \$717, up to 25 percent off name-brand watches and 66 percent off select fine jewelry.

"To say that this benefit has been around for 117 years is a testament to the loyalty of generations of military shoppers," said Lackland Exchange Manager Stacie Sterling. "July 25th is our annual opportunity to celebrate and thank customers for making the Exchange their first choice."



Get some muscle in your ads.

Call today to strengthen your advertising dollars!



250-2519

Find more information
when you visit

sacommunities.com

Edwards Aquifer Level
in feet above sea level

**CURRENT
LEVEL
647.6'**

Normal - above 660'
Stage I - 660'
Stage II - 650'
Stage III - 642'
Stage IV - 640.5'
Stage V - 637'

For water restrictions, visit www.502abw.af.mil

Our Puppy Program is looking for enthusiastic foster parents!

Worldwide need for detection dogs has increased dramatically. The Department of Defense Military Working Dog Breeding program breeds to meet the growing requirement for security at home and abroad.

A large part of the success of this program is dependent upon volunteers to provide temporary homes for developing puppies.

The 341st Training Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland operates a breeding program for military working dogs in support of the Department of Defense Military Working Dog program. These dogs are a vital part of our national defense and serve in Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps units around the globe.

You can become part of this important effort by volunteering your home and time to raise a military working dog.

Who can help? We are looking for families who:

- have the time and patience to raise a young puppy from eight weeks to seven months of age,
- have a home that will provide a stimulating and safe environment for a young puppy, and
- have the desire and interest to learn how to raise a future military working dog.



**Department of
Defense Military
Working Dog
Breeding Program**

If you are interested in becoming a part of our foster family or would like more information on this great program, please contact us!

Call us at 210-671-3686, or email us at 341TRSPP@lackland.af.mil

LOCAL BRIEFS

AARP SAFE DRIVER PROGRAM

The Lackland Retiree Activities Office is sponsoring an AARP safe driver program Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Freedom Chapel.

Participants receive a certificate, which makes them eligible for a discount in automobile insurance. The course is good for three years.

Cost is \$12 for AARP members with their membership card and \$14 for non-members. All educators get a special \$5 rate for the July class.

For information, contact the RAO at 210-671-2728 or B.J. Laymon after 1 p.m. at 210-671-4208.

BUILD-A-BACKPACK PROGRAM

The Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland School Liaison Office and the Lackland Youth Center have kicked off their annual build-a-backpack program, which provides backpacks with school supplies to local military children.

To make a donation, a listing of supplies is available at the school liaison office. Backpacks can be delivered to the Airman and Family

Readiness Center, the Lackland Youth Center, Family Child Care, the Lackland Child Development Center, the Gateway CDC or the Kelly Field CDC through Aug. 17.

For more details, call 210-671-3722 or email Lackland.slo@us.af.mil.

PILOT TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

The Lackland Youth Center is initiating a pilot program to provide transportation to and from Valley Hi and Sun Valley Elementary Schools for youth enrolled in the Before/After School program for the coming school year.

For more information, contact the Youth Center at 210-671-2510.

CHILDREN'S THEATER AUDITION SIGN UP

Registration is under way for students entering grades 1 through 12 to audition for the Missoula Children's Theater. Sign up at the Arnold Hall Community Center or the Lackland Youth Center.

Production auditions for "The Pied Piper" are July 30, 10 a.m., at Arnold Hall. No preparations are necessary, and participants must stay the entire two hours.

Rehearsals will be held daily

July 30 through Aug. 3, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The play performance is Aug. 3, 3 p.m., at the Bob Hope Performing Arts Center.

For details, call Arnold Hall at 210-671-2619/2532 or the Lackland Youth Center at 210-671-2510.

802ND LRS SUPPLY TRAINING

The 802nd Logistics Readiness Squadron's Equipment Accountability Element conducts three customer supply training classes on the third Wednesday of each month in Bldg. 5160, second floor conference room.

The classes and start times are Block I General Supply Training at 8 a.m., Block II Bench Stock Training at 8:45 a.m., and Block III Equipment Custodian Supplemental/Refresher Training at 9:30 a.m.

To register or for more information, contact Ray Holland or Rain Virgino at 210-925-1140/2514.

HAWC TOBACCO CESSATION CLASSES

The Health and Wellness Center offers free tobacco cessation classes for Department of Defense healthcare beneficiaries the first Tuesday of every month in Bldg.

2513 at 3 p.m.

The classes offer proven methods for quitting, and combine brief counseling with medications. The program runs for four consecutive weeks.

For additional information, call Shannon Jones at 210-925-6301.

KELLY DENTAL CLINIC RELOCATION

The Kelly Dental Clinic is relocating dental services to the Dunn Dental Clinic, Bldg. 6418, through July 31.

For more information, contact Tech. Sgt. Nana Saahene at 210-671-9761 or Master Sgt. Janene Buchanan at 210-925-1846.

SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Immunization records for children of active-duty military parents are now available online.

For details on how to access the secure website and a copy of a child's immunization records, contact the Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center's Allergy and Immunizations Clinic at 210-292-5730.

DOD MARROW DONOR PROGRAM

The Department of Defense

bone marrow donor program needs volunteers to enroll in the program.

Eligible volunteers include all active-duty members and their dependents, Coast Guard, Guard, Reserve and DOD civilians, ages 18 to 60 and in good health.

For details, contact Tech. Sgt. Sonia Vaquera at 210-977-6643.

RETIRED ENLISTED MEETING

Retired Enlisted Association, Chapter 80, meetings are held at the Gateway Club every fourth Wednesday of the month at 1 p.m. For details, call Don Higginbotham at 210-658-2344.

JBSA AFSO21 8-STEP WORKSHOP

Joint Base San Antonio 8-Step Problem Solving Workshop is Aug. 14 in 37th Training Wing Headquarters, Bldg. 2484, at JBSA-Lackland.

The AFSO21 program's 8-Step Problem Solving Workshop provides Air Force military and civilian personnel with in-depth knowledge of the process.

To register, visit the AFSO21 Community of Practice page on the Air Force Portal, or contact Sean Harrington at 210-671-8295.

CHAPEL SERVICES

Christian

Catholic

Monday-Friday:

Freedom Chapel

Daily Eucharist, 11:30 a.m.

Saturday:

Freedom Chapel

Eucharist, 5:30 p.m.

Reconciliation after Eucharist

Sunday:

Freedom Chapel

Religious Ed., 9 a.m.

Eucharist, 11 a.m.

Spanish Mass, 8 a.m.

Orthodox

Saturday:

Airmen Memorial Chapel

Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.

Religious Ed., 10:45 a.m.

Protestant

Saturday:

Gateway Chapel

Seventh-Day Adventist

Service, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Sunday:

Airmen Memorial Chapel

Liturgical Service, 8 a.m.

Freedom Chapel

Contemporary Service,

9:30 a.m.

Gospel Service,

12:30 p.m.

Children's Church provided

Religious Ed., 11 a.m.

Wednesday and Thursday:

Bible Study, 6 p.m.

Sunday:

Hope Chapel, Bldg. 10338

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
8-10 a.m.

Islamic

Friday:

Global Ministry Center, Bldg. 7452

Friday:

Jummah Prayer, 1:15 to 2:15 p.m.

Sunday:

Religious Ed., 9-11 a.m.

Jewish

Friday:

Airmen Memorial Chapel

Sabbath Eve Service,

4 p.m.

Sunday:

Religious Ed., 12:30 p.m.

Wicca

Second Wednesday, July and

August only: Freedom Chapel

Room 8, San Antonio Military
Open Circle, 6 p.m.

Buddhist

Sunday:

BMT Reception Center,
10 a.m. to noon.

Eckankar

Every first, third, fifth Saturday:

Gateway Chapel

12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Baha'i

Every first, third, fifth Sunday:

Gateway Chapel

11 a.m. to noon

For more details, contact

Freedom Chapel
671-4208

Gateway Chapel
671-2911

Hope Chapel
671-2941

KEY FAMILY SUPPORT RESOURCES

Air Force Aid Society	671-3722
Airman & Family Readiness Center	671-3722
Airman's Attic	671-1780
Base Post Office	671-1058
Bowling Center	671-2271
DEERS	800-538-9552
Exceptional Family Member Program	671-3722
Family Child Care	671-3376
Legal Office	671-3362
Library	671-3610
Medical Appointment Line	916-9900
MPF ID Cards	671-6006
Outdoor Recreation	925-5532
TRICARE Info	800-444-5445
Thrifty Shop	671-3608

Lackland Enlisted Spouses' Club	www.lacklandesc.org
Lackland Force Support Squadron	www.lacklandfss.com
Lackland ISD	www.lacklandisd.net
Lackland Officers' Spouses' Club	www.lacklandosc.org
Lackland Public website	www.lackland.af.mil
My Air Force Life	www.MyAirForceLife.com

What's Happening

Family Support Events

JULY 20

BMT FAMILY SEMINAR

The Air Force Basic Military Training Family Seminar is today at noon in the BMT Reception Center, Bldg. 7246.

The seminar provides information on the Air Force and its benefits to family members of graduating Airmen.

For details, call 210-671-3722.

COUPON SAVERS MEETING

The Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland scissor savers coupon group meets today, 1-3 p.m., at the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

For more information, email LAFBscissorsavers@gmail.com.

JULY 23

FAMILY READINESS BRIEFING

A mandatory family readiness briefing for personnel who are deploying is Monday, 10:30-11:30 a.m., at

the Airman and Family

Readiness Center. The briefing is for personnel who are deploying longer than 30 days, or who are going on remote assignments.

For details, call 210-671-3722.

RETURN, REUNION SEMINAR

A return and reunion seminar is Monday, 2:30-3:30 p.m., at the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

The seminar is an informal forum for family members who wish to talk about their individual experiences and the stress caused by deployment-related separations.

For details, call 210-671-3722.

JULY 24

AMVET REPRESENTATIVE

An American Veterans national service officer is available to help with disability claims Tuesday, 8 a.m. to noon, at the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

For details, call 210-699-5087.

Monthly Meetings

ENLISTED SPOUSES' CLUB

The Lackland Enlisted Spouses' Club meets every third Tuesday of the month at the Balfour Beatty Community Center, 6:30-8:30 p.m. For more information, visit www.lacklandesc.org.

OFFICERS' SPOUSES' CLUB

The Lackland Officers' Spouses' Club meets every third Tuesday of the month. For information, visit www.lacklandosc.org.

MILITARY COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

The Military Council of Catholic Women meets the first Friday of the month, 9:30 a.m., at Freedom Chapel. For information, call 210-671-4208.

On the web www.lacklandfss.com

JULY 24-26

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TAP

A three-day senior leadership transition assistance program for separating or retiring military personnel is Tuesday through Thursday, 7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, at the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

The job search seminar, taught by the Texas Workforce Commission, focuses on multiple employment-

related topics for military members who seek senior, executive or management-level leadership positions. Pre-separation briefing attendance and a completed Department of Defense Form 2648 are prerequisites for the seminar.

For details, call 210-671-3722.

JULY 25

RIGHT START ORIENTATION

Right Start Orientation, a class designed for Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland newcomers, is Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Gateway Club.

For details, call 210-671-3722.

JULY 26

PROTESTANT WOMEN OF THE CHAPEL

The Protestant Women of the Chapel group meets for Bible study Thursday, 6 p.m., at Freedom Chapel.

JULY 27

BMT FAMILY SEMINAR

The Air Force Basic Military Training Family Seminar is July 27 at noon in the BMT Reception Center, Bldg. 7246.

The seminar provides information on the Air Force and its benefits to family members of graduating Airmen.

For details, call 210-671-3722.

JULY 30

FAMILY READINESS BRIEFING

A mandatory family readiness briefing for personnel who are deploying is July 30, 10:30-11:30 a.m., at the Airman and Family Readiness Center. The briefing is for personnel who are deploying longer than 30 days, or who are going on remote assignments.

For details, call 210-671-3722.

RETURN, REUNION SEMINAR

A return and reunion seminar is July 30, 2:30-3:30 p.m., at the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

The seminar is an informal forum for family members who wish to talk about their individual experiences and the stress caused by deployment-related separations.

JULY 31

AMVET REPRESENTATIVE

An American Veterans national service officer is available to help with disability claims July 31, 8 a.m. to noon, at the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

Competitive softball strengthens family bond

By Jose T. Garza III
Sports Editor

When center fielder Derrick Ayon, 22, joined the 802nd Force Support Squadron this season, his brother Daniel, a 26-year-old shortstop, joked about not embarrassing him and the team.

That's not been the case thus far for the two brothers who grew up loving baseball first and foremost.

Since being on the team, the younger Ayon brother has brought humor and youthfulness to an FSS team with older players. The team has already clinched a spot in next week's base intramural softball playoffs.

"I try to give it my best," Derrick said. "Since I'm the youngest guy, I try to bring some youth to the team, and have my teammates laugh as much as possible. Other than playing on the field, that's my role on the team."

Brother Daniel is satisfied with what his brother has brought athletically to the FSS.

"Having my brother on the team has given us more depth on an already solid lineup," Daniel said. "He is still getting used to the nuances of softball, but he has knowledge of the game, which has allowed him to make good plays in the field and come through with timely hits."

Derrick described his first season playing with his brother as crazy.

"The only time we played ball with each other was when we were just messing around. Now that games count, it's pretty neat to be (on the same) team," Derrick said.

Daniel was on the FSS team that went on to win the JBSA-wide softball championship after losing in the semifinals of the base playoffs.

He believes the team has the talent to win both the JBSA-Lackland base title and the JBSA-wide championship this year, and winning with his brother on the team would be "cool as well," he said.

For Derrick, it would be a "neat" accomplishment to win his first JBSA softball titles alongside his older brother.

"Playing with my brother for the first time and winning a championship for the first time, I can't think of anything better," Derrick said.

Their cohesiveness may have come from playing around the softball field while watching their father, Teddy Ayon, play ball during his two tours at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

"Back then, all my buddies in the military could envision (my) little kids running around the field playing softball one day," Teddy said.

Daniel was the first of the Ayon brothers to follow in his father's footsteps and participate in military softball competition.



Photo by Robbin Cresswell

Derrick, left, and Daniel Ayon are competing together for the first time on the 802nd Force Support Squadron softball team. Both hope to win their first JBSA softball title this season as family members on the same team.

Moving to the Gateway Fitness Center after working at the Gillum for four years, Ayon joined the 802nd FSS intramural softball team. He was invited to join the JBSA-Lackland Warhawks varsity softball team where he played with his father.

It was one happy family reunion on the softball diamond that furthered the bond between father and son.

"We've always been a close family," Teddy said. "Their mother and I have always preached that family comes first, and you look out for one another because that's all you have."

"Playing on the varsity team with my dad last year was a lot of fun," Daniel said. "My dad and I have always been close, but being in a competitive environment added a new dynamic to our relationship. It was great being out there not only as father and son, but "one of the guys" as well."

Derrick proceeded to follow in his father and older brother's footsteps and play competitive soft-

ball on military soil. He joined the FSS softball team this season after getting hired at the Warhawk Fitness Center in August 2011.

"Playing sports all the time, I just wanted to get back in it," Derrick said.

The sibling rivalry, which includes yet another brother in the middle, Damon, pushed the younger Derrick to develop his competitive skills in order to keep up with his older brothers. All dad could do was watch as they tried to one-up each other.

"When one (brother) got into something, the other tried to do it better," Teddy said. "(Derrick) had the luxury of being able to pick up skills (from his) older brothers."

Playing softball together this season has only furthered the bond between brothers.

"We've been close forever; we can't get much closer than we already are. If anything, it's neat to play (together), and get out there and compete with each other," Daniel said.

UPCOMING

SCHOOL SPORTS PHYSICALS

Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center is offering Saturday sports physicals for military dependents, ages 6-26, who are enrolled in the Pediatric, Adolescent Medicine, or Family Health Clinics at Wilford Hall.

Physicals will be available Aug. 11 and Aug. 18 from 8-11 a.m. and no appointments are necessary.

Patients should bring their sports physical examination school forms, immunization records, and any third party liability or alternate insurance cards.

Parents of children with chronic medical conditions like asthma and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder must schedule a sports physical appointment with their Primary Care Manager.

SCOREBOARD

SOFTBALL

Competitive	W	L
1. NIOC/ Co H	11	3
2. 802nd FSS	11	3
3. 149th FW	8	6
4. 343rd TRS	8	6
5. Radiology	7	7
6. 341st TRS	5	9
7. 737th TRG	5	9
8. Civil Eng Sq	1	13

Intermediate	W	L
1. 668th ALIS	15	1
2. Security Forces	13	3
3. 802nd OSS	13	3
4. 37th TRSS	11	5
5. Crypto Div	11	5
6. IAAFA	10	6
7. 624th OC	10	6
8. Dental Gp	10	6
9. 543rd Spt Sq	8	8
10. AFISRA	8	8
11. AFSVA	7	9
12. 802nd LRS	5	11
13. 59th CPSC	5	11
14. 717th MI Bn	5	11
15. DLIELC	5	11
16. 344th TRS	5	11
17. AFPAA	2	14
18. 688th IOW	1	15

Recreation	W	L
1. 433rd AFRC	11	3
2. 453rd EWS	10	4
3. 35th IS	9	4
4. 690th NSG	9	4
5. Co H/Marines	6	7
6. 802nd CPTS	5	8
7. 772nd ESG	2	11
8. 318th OSS	1	12

Former Steeler Franco Harris visits JB-SA-Lackland

400-plus Pittsburgh fans line up to meet hall of famer

By Jose T. Garza III
Sports Editor

Pro Football Hall of Famer Franco Harris may have been shining shoes growing up around military bases, but his star shone brighter on the NFL gridiron for 12 years.

Harris built a hall of fame career mostly as a member of the Pittsburgh Steelers, winning four Super Bowls, including one Super Bowl MVP during his years with the Steelers.

But despite his all pro career, Franco is most likely remembered for one play – the “Immaculate Reception.”

Harris caught the winning touchdown off a tipped ball from Steelers teammate John “Frenchy” Fuqua, handing the Steelers the 13-7 victory over the Oakland Raiders in the American Football Conference Divisional playoffs Dec. 23, 1972.

Two Pittsburgh residents would call the play the “Immaculate Reception,” later made popular by Pittsburgh Sportscaster Myron Cope.

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the “Immaculate Reception,” Harris stopped by the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Military Clothing Store July 12 to autograph photographs of the famous catch now etched in Steelers’ history.

Harris said, “There would be grand celebrations around Pittsburgh to celebrate the memorable play while there would be sad days in Oakland. It’s been a great 40 years in Pittsburgh for me.”

While most in the local community are presumably Dallas Cowboys aficionados, more than 400 fans invaded the autograph session adorned in Steelers black and yellow regalia and ready with memorabilia for Harris to sign.

“I’ve never seen so many Steelers fans in one place, except maybe in Pittsburgh,” JB-SA-Lackland Military Clothing Store manager Beverly Schippmann said. “He was so gracious to take time out of his schedule to greet each and every person in and out of uniform.”

Forty years later, NFL fans still debate whether Harris truly caught the ball.

“When I’m traveling, people still talk about it. There are some people who will say, ‘You did catch it,’” he said. “It is amazing that (the Immaculate Reception) is bigger than ever.

The “Immaculate Reception” may never have taken place, if not for a slant toward



Photo by Larry Kishur

NFL Hall of Famer and four-time Super Bowl champion Franco Harris autographs the outfit of eight-month-old Matilyn Armenta as mother Savanna Armenta looks on July 12 at the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Military Clothing Store.

a different career path.

The son of a Korean War and World War II veteran, Harris, who grew up at Fort Dix, N.J., aspired to join the Army, just like his father, and be in the Special Forces.

But his life took a different route after he graduated from high school and was awarded a football scholarship to Penn State University.

Harris played for the Nittany Lions from 1969 to 1971 before being drafted by the Steelers in 1972.

Deeming himself an “Army brat,” Harris never forgot his roots despite amassing four Super Bowl titles in his 12-year career.

Harris’ days of bagging at the commis-

sary and shining shoes on base led him to develop a level of appreciation for what the military has done for his family and others.

He continues to show his support and appreciation for the military every year by visiting veteran’s hospitals during Super Bowl weekend – a 10-year tradition that is just of several stops he makes each year to meet with troops.

“The military just connects you in a big way,” Harris said. “You don’t really think about it when you’re young, but later in life you get to appreciate more and more what it stands for, and the people who are part of that, especially my family.”